THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R.BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) A budget provision of Rs.65 crore was made in respect of central share of the assistance for development of infrastructure facilities for the judiciary for the financial year 2006-07. Release of funds to the States / UTs is made on the basis of furnishing of Utilization Certificates (UCs) by the recipient entities in respect of the funds released to them earlier. On the basis of the UCs furnished by these entities and on the basis of proposals received from a few States, an amount of Rs. 50.19 crore, including Rs. 2 crore in respect of Family Courts, was released to the States/UTs in the financial year 2006-07. Except for the unutilized provision in respect of States in the North Eastern Region, the unutilized portion of the budget provision for the year 2006-07 stands surrendered.

Increase in strength of judges

2957.SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to increase the strength of Judges of High Court at Chennai and permanent bench at Madurai in view of large number of pending cases;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The strength of the High Court is reviewed once in three years. Last review was conducted in the year 2006 in which the Madras High Court did not qualify for increase in their judge strength. Judge strength of the benches of the High Courts, including Madurai Bench, is not reviewed separately as they are an integral part of the High Courts.